

2-15-2011

## Newsroom: RWU Law Students Advise Local Teens

Roger Williams University School of Law

Follow this and additional works at: [https://docs.rwu.edu/law\\_archives\\_life](https://docs.rwu.edu/law_archives_life)

---

### Recommended Citation

Roger Williams University School of Law, "Newsroom: RWU Law Students Advise Local Teens" (2011). *Life of the Law School (1993- )*. 223.

[https://docs.rwu.edu/law\\_archives\\_life/223](https://docs.rwu.edu/law_archives_life/223)

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Archives & Law School History at DOCS@RWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Life of the Law School (1993- ) by an authorized administrator of DOCS@RWU. For more information, please contact [mwu@rwu.edu](mailto:mwu@rwu.edu).

# Newsroom

## RWU Law Students Advise Local Teens

East Bay News covers a local high school class in which students learn about law by talking to judges, legislators -- and RWU Law students!

East Bay Rhode Island reports: "[\*Grant affords Barrington students unique experience\*](#)" by Joan Warren.

**BARRINGTON, Feb. 15, 2011** — Tammy McMichael's American Government class received a special treat on the last day of classes before mid-year exams at the end of January, as Rhode Island Superior Court Judge Judith Savage stopped by for a visit.

The class and Judge Savage formed a relationship last fall when the students traveled to the courthouse on South Main Street in Providence and by happenstance, met her in the coffee shop on the first floor.

"I saw this group of students and asked what they were doing. They said they were going to see a trial and I invited them to my courtroom," Judge Savage said.

The class and other students in American Government classes were fortunate enough to see the judicial system in action through a grant from the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities. The \$7,750 grant, written by Ms. McMichael and Barrington High School Principal Joseph Hurley, enabled students to not only visit Rhode Island Superior Court, but also tour the Statehouse and conduct a mock legislative session.

"They sat at the legislators' desk and debated and voted on such issues as gay marriage, high school graduation outcomes and protests at military funerals. A lively debate occurred," she said.

The experience was very interesting to students and lasted throughout the semester. **Students from Roger Williams University School of Law came into the classroom over the semester to make presentations as well.**

Devon Wallick, a junior at the high school, said the course was a great way to learn about state government.

"We started learning about government in September when the school year started, but we specifically learned about the judicial branch from around mid-November to early December. As much as we learned in class in that time nothing compares to being there in person watching a trial unfold. It really solidifies all the information that we learned in an interesting and active way," Devon said.

The class sat in on a trial in November involving a woman accused of mis-using drugs while working at a nursing home.

"Going into the court house to observe the trial, I expected more intensity and a faster pace... It was not nearly as fast paced, but the intensity was there because you realized that someone's life is on the line," he said.

During Judge Savage's visit to the classroom, she talked a bit about the trial but did not go into specifics, other than to say the accused was convicted of three out of six charges. She talked about the sentencing process.

"There are many factors when a judge crafts a sentence after a pre-sentence report and the prosecutor makes a recommendation. Factors include the crime itself, past crimes, impact on everyone involved, acceptance of responsibility and remorse. A great deal goes into those decisions," Judge Savage told the class.

The students were very attentive to the judge and her presentation.

"When I first signed up for American Government I didn't really know what to expect," Devon said. "This class gave me a curiosity about government that made me decide to become a campaign volunteer and to begin considering political science as a possible area of study."

Students from Jane Nobrega's and Allyn Grantham's classes were also involved in the grant program. Ms. Nobrega is an American Government teacher and Mr. Grantham is the Alternate Learning Program (ALP) American Government teacher.

Ms. McMichael said there is money left over from the grant and it will be used for similar field trips this semester.

Ms. McMichael said she was pleased that her class had the unique opportunity. Her students enjoyed the experience as well.

"Mrs. McMichael is a wonderful teacher because she doesn't just read from the textbook or have kids write for an entire class period. She loves to tell many different stories to the class about past elections, past cases, and even her own personal stories about the government," Devon said.

*For full story, click [here](#).*